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www.psc.sc.gov

Email form to: [contact@psc.sc.gov](mailto:contact@psc.sc.gov)

\* Required Fields

**Letter of Protest**

**Print**

**Email**

Date: \* May 20, 2011

**in Docket \* 2011 - 47 - WS**

**Protestant Information:**

Name \* Whitney Maxwell  
Mailing Address \* 300 Loskin Lane  
City, State Zip \* Lexington, SC 29073 Phone \* (803) 520-6791  
E-mail whitney813@hotmail.com

**1. What is your connection or interest in this case? \* For example, are you a customer of the Company that is the subject of this pending proceeding? (This section must be completed. Attach additional information if necessary.)**

I am a water and sewer customer of Carolina Water Service, Incorporated in the Maple Grove subdivision in Lexington, SC. I am considered part of the "I-20" water system, am a "Water Distribution Only" customer, and a standard sewer customer.

**2. Please give a concise statement of your protest. \* (This section must be completed. Attach additional information if necessary.)**

The proposed increase in CWS rates is unreasonable and unfair. I do not believe that I should be responsible for paying for water loss occurring between master meters and resident meters.

**3. Do you wish to make an appearance at a hearing in this proceeding, if scheduled, and offer sworn testimony? \***  
(This section should be completed.)

I would be willing to appear at the hearing if my schedule permits.

# **Protest the CWS Rate Increase\***

## **Current Rates**

Base Facilities Charge (BFC) \$11.09

Commodity Charge (Distribution Charge) \$2.03 per 1,000 gallons

"Pass-through" Charge (Supply Charge) Varies per month

## **Proposed New Rates**

Base Facilities Charge (BFC) \$19.87

Commodity Charge (Distribution Charge) \$3.71 per 1,000 gallons

"Pass-through" Charge (Supply Charge)

**This is an 83% increase in Commodity Charge and a 79% increase in BFC!!!**

**Plus...the "pass-through" portion and this rate structure is unfair.**

CWS *only* maintains lines and bills distribution only customers

CWS does not treat or purify your water

You pay for all water lost on your water system!

**Do you have a horror story with CWS (Owned by Utilities, Inc.)? Here are some common complaints across all Utilities, Inc. companies...**

Bills are sent inconsistently, riddled with errors, and not sent in a timely manner

Customer service doesn't help

Supply charge fluctuates drastically and is not auditable

Leaks on CWS lines run for days, even weeks before they are fixed (and customers pay) or go undetected

Lack of boil water advisories when there is a break in the line

We pay some of the highest rates in the state, but do not have fire hydrants!

CWS terminates service for customers who did not receive bills and/or did not receive notification of termination

Water pressure is too low or too high

**You must take the time to protest the rate increase – otherwise you are agreeing to it. Here's how and what to say...**

**Deadline is May 26<sup>th</sup>**

\*This flyer is intended for "distribution-only" customers on the "I-20 system".

## **What to Do**

**DEADLINE IS MAY 26<sup>th</sup>**

1) protest the rate increase by letter

2) also protest the rate increase by giving sworn testimony at a public hearing

3) further protest the rate increase by becoming an intervener (if you are willing to do this I am willing to help you!

Leslie Hendrix at [leslieahendrix@gmail.com](mailto:leslieahendrix@gmail.com))

Here are the instructions and details:

[http://www.psc.sc.gov/forms/Letter\\_of\\_Protest\\_Instructions-FAQ.pdf](http://www.psc.sc.gov/forms/Letter_of_Protest_Instructions-FAQ.pdf)

And the form

[http://www.psc.sc.gov/forms/Letter\\_of\\_Protest\\_Form\\_pub\\_0001.pdf](http://www.psc.sc.gov/forms/Letter_of_Protest_Form_pub_0001.pdf)

And a link to the docket (giving all important dates and filings)

<http://dms.psc.sc.gov/dockets/dockets.cfc?Method=DocketDetail&DocketID=111955>

### What to Say

- 1) Discuss the “pass-through” mechanism and how it is unfair
  - Suggest the “pass-through” mechanism be changed in the new rate structure – specifically that customers should **only** be billed for the gallons of West Cola water that pass through their individual meter and **only** at the rate that West Cola charges CWS
  - Say that you certainly should **not** be paying for water used for waste water treatment plants (WWTP) – this water usage should be metered (not estimated) at the WWTP and not be included in water customers' rate calculations or charges!
  - Point out that the consumer has NO control over water lost between the master meter and resident meters. Customers should not have to pay for variable costs the utility could control better but doesn't (and consumers have *no* control over these costs). For an example of how Utilities, Inc employees handle water loss with a lack of a sense of urgency, see the videos located at <http://www.youtube.com/user/leslieahendrix>. Making customers pay for all lost water gives no incentive for CWS to implement a water loss program (avoiding theft, preventing/detecting/repairing leaks, etc...)
  - Suggest that distribution only customers should not have the same costs go into their Base Facilities Charge and Commodity Charge as non-distribution only customers. CWS *only* has to maintain lines and bill customers in distribution only water systems – these customers should not pay for water treatment plants and facilities! We already pay for all that in the West Columbia (Supply Charge).
- 2) Discuss your horror stories about customer service and billing issues. See the direct testimony of Dawn Hipp in docket 2010-146-WS for some good ways to word your complaints here  
<http://dms.psc.sc.gov/pdf/matters/3D452556-B48B-4CA5-AA084775FD33EEAF.pdf>
- 3) Call to attention the fact that CWS charges high rates, but does not provide fire hydrants and will not allow the use of fire hydrants on their lines in case of fire!!! (Public Service Commission has no law that can force the utility to get fire hydrants – you'll have to petition the general assembly for that one – but, raising the issue will further show lack of concern for the customer on the part of CWS.)
- 4) Point out that Utilities, Inc. owns 5 water companies in SC and the same employees carry out all the maintenance, etc. Also, Utilities, Inc operates water companies in 17 states and one office does the billing for all states. Plus they have lots of sister companies – housed in the same location in Northbrook, IL. Urge the PSC to ensure the financial documents provided in the CWS rate case application are scrutinized so that monies associated with cross company/cross state functions can be adjusted accordingly.
- 5) If you have not seen any capital improvements in your neighborhood (upgrades to the system), point that out and demand to know where there have been supposed capital improvements on the system since its inception.
- 6) Ask you legislators or other political figures to get involved! You may find some that won't do anything.....could this be due to the fact that some have taken campaign donations from the attorneys that represent CWS???